

Nev. may allow gambling without cash

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada casino customers inched closer Thursday to being able to sign up for and fund a wagering account that could be used to gamble at slot machines, table games and bingo parlors.

The concept of using wagering accounts is already in play for sports betting, mobile wagering and online poker play within the state. Extending the use of an account through a loyalty card is the next iteration of making it more convenient for customers to play without cash.

Members of the state Gaming Control Board conducted a workshop meeting Thursday to discuss amendments to regulations that would enable play through pre-established accounts.

Read the whole story

Wildflower photography subject of talk

Roger Rosenberger, wildflower photographer extraordinaire, returns to share the current season of wildflowers in vivid photographs and impart advise on how to take breathtaking images.

Joining Rosenberger will be Julie Carville, launching her newest book, "Tahoe's Spectacular Wildflower Trails". This book will guide people along Tahoe's trails and deeply into

the wonders and stories of Sierra plants. Clear trail descriptions and natural history are included.

The free talk is Aug. 16 at 6pm at the South Lake Tahoe Library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.

Fall care for a healthier, better looking lawn

By Melinda Myers

As summer fades into fall it is time to help lawns recover from summer stress and prepare for the winter ahead.

Continue to mow your lawn as long as it continues to grow. Grow cool season grasses like bluegrass, fescue and ryegrass 2-1/2 to 3-1/2 inches tall. Warm season grasses like bermudagrass, carpetgrass, centipedegrass and zoysia should be grown at 1 to 2 inches tall while St. Augustine should a bit higher, 2 to 3 inches, for best results. Taller grass is better able to compete with weeds. And there is no need to cut it shorter for the health of your lawn.

Mow often, removing no more than one third the total height. Leave these short clippings on the lawn. They will quickly break down, adding organic matter, moisture and nutrients to the soil.

And as you mow you can take care of all those fall leaves at the same time. Shred the fall leaves and allow them to remain on the lawn. As long as you can see the leaf blades through the shredded leaves your lawn will be fine. And just like the clippings, they add nutrients and organic matter to the soil.



A fall fertilization can help lawns recover from the stresses of summer.
Photo/Mark Avery

Fertilize your lawn with a low nitrogen, slow release fertilizer. University research has shown that fall fertilization is the most beneficial practice for home lawns. Less disease problems and slower weed growth means your lawns – not the weeds and pests – benefit from the nutrients. Fall fertilization also helps lawns recover from the stresses of summer because it encourages deep roots and denser growth that can better compete with weeds and tolerate disease and insects.

Those in colder regions growing cool weather bluegrass, fescue and perennial ryegrass should fertilize around Labor Day and sometime between Halloween and Thanksgiving, but before the ground freezes.

Homeowners in warmer climates growing warm season grasses like centipede, Bermuda and zoysia should fertilize around Labor Day. Apply a low nitrogen slow release fertilizer then and in early October if overseeding the lawn. Make sure the last fall

application is at least one month prior to the average first killing frost. Fertilizing later can result in winter damage.

Weeds often gain a foothold in the lawn during the stressful summer months. A healthy lawn is the best defense. Even with proper care weeds can bully their way into the lawn. Try digging, root and all, to remove small populations of weeds. Weeding can be a great tension reducer and physical workout.

If this isn't possible, consider spot treating weeds or problem areas with a broadleaf weedkiller. Those looking for more organic options may want to try one of the more eco-friendly products with the active ingredient Fehedta or Hedta. Whether using traditional or environmentally-friendly products read and follow label directions carefully. All these products are plant killers and can cause damage to other plants if not applied properly.

Fall, when the lawn is actively growing, is the best time to core aerate or dethatch northern lawns suffering from thatch build up or compacted soil. Thatch is a layer of partially decomposed dead grass plants that prevents water and nutrients from reaching the grass roots. Use a dethatching machine to remove thatch layers greater than one half an inch. Or core aerate the lawn to create openings in the thatch layer and help reduce soil compaction to encourage root growth and allow water and nutrients to infiltrate the soil.

Overseeding your lawn in the fall helps increase thickness and improves the overall health and appearance of the lawn. For best results, overseed directly after aerating.

Begin implementing some of these strategies and soon you'll be on your way to a healthier, better looking lawn for the coming growing season.

Gardening expert Melinda Myers has more than 30 years of horticulture experience and has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening" and the "Midwest

Editorial: Losing Lake Tahoe to climate change

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Aug. 4, 2016, Sacramento Bee.*

As a young reporter, Mark Twain visited Lake Tahoe. Its clear, cobalt blue water so entranced him that he wrote of it later, in "The Innocents Abroad."

"I have fished for trout, in Tahoe," Twain wrote, "and at a measured depth of eighty-four feet I have seen them put their noses to the bait and I could see their gills open and shut."

That was then. One hundred fifty years or so later, a new "state-of-the-lake" report issued last month by researchers at UC Davis has found that climate change has left the lake increasingly opaque and warm.

Surface temperatures are rising faster than scientists have ever recorded. The "deep mixing" that oxygenates the lake bottom hasn't happened in four years. And forget seeing trout 84 feet below the surface. Last year, the 10-inch white disk scientists lower into the lake to gauge that "wonderful transparency," as Twain called it, averaged 73.1 feet before it disappeared into the murk.

Read the whole story

Commissioners OK Squaw Valley mega project



The two sides of the proposed development at Squaw Valley's village. Photos/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – On eight 4-2 votes, the Placer County Planning Commission on Thursday approved several items pertaining to the future of Squaw Valley.

KSL, which has owned Squaw since 2010, wants to do what former Squaw Valley Village owner Intrawest did not do; complete the four-phase project. But this would be on a grander scale.

While the 1983 Squaw Valley General Plan allows for 4,200 bedrooms in Olympic Valley, the plan being proposed has 1,493

bedrooms. This includes 35 cabins (developer's description) (time share mansions is opponents' description) in Shirley Canyon – an area currently not developed.

"We would like to restore Squaw Valley-Alpine to a pre-eminent destination," Andy Wirth, CEO of Squaw Valley, said. "There is a substantial deficit in the vacation experience in terms of the quality of lodging and variety."

After nine hours, which included comments from nearly 100 people, the commissioners spent the next hour asking staff clarifying questions before they voted.

Commissioner Richard Johnson asked about issues in the 15-page letter Attorney General Kamala Harris sent on Tuesday.

Chief Deputy County Counsel Valerie Flood said, "I don't see anything in the letter that would prevent us from going forward." She said Harris didn't say anything that others hadn't already said.

(It is unusual for an AG to weigh in on an EIR.)

Harris wrote, "... the FEIR should be revised and recirculated to adequately address the project's (green house gas) impacts and potential impacts to Lake Tahoe. Climate change is a critical issue for California and Lake Tahoe is a national, state, and local treasure and the county should not disregard impacts in these areas in reviewing the project. More information is needed to fully understand what the project's impacts will be on greenhouse gas emissions and on Lake Tahoe."



Immediately after the Aug. 11 vote, Squaw CEO Andy Wirth, left, went to speak with Commissioner Wayne Nader, who voted no. Photo/LTN

Voting no were commissioners Wayne Nader and Mickey Gray. Gray represents the district where the project resides. Commissioner Fred Arcuri was absent.

The main decisions the commissioners had to make were whether to certify the final environmental impact report, approve the specific plan, amend the Squaw Valley General Plan, approve the development agreement and OK the water assessment.

Traffic was a main topic for the opponents – the level of service and the lack of analysis in regards to other proposed projects inside and outside the basin. (Squaw Valley is not in the Tahoe basin.)

Harris wrote, “Because of the proximity-of the proposed development to Lake Tahoe, we are concerned about the impacts the development will have within the Tahoe basin. We are particularly concerned with the project’s resulting increases

in vehicular use and traffic within the basin.”

The EIR for the most part ignored Lake Tahoe.

Harris’ letter was one of more than 300 that were submitted.

This is not the end of the road for Squaw Valley Real Estate, the applicant and a subsidiary of resort owners KSL. The Board of Supervisors will have the final say regarding the potential billion-dollar, 25-year project. The supes are likely to hear the project proposal this fall.

The vote on Aug. 11 came after the **Squaw Valley Municipal Advisory Council** voted no in May.



More than 400 people turned out for the Squaw hearing, even though the capacity sign said 268. Photo/LTN

Proponents say it’s necessary to offer year-round activities as well as something to do for non-skiers and for when the weather isn’t ideal. Opponents say the natural surroundings should be good enough.

Squaw is not unique in wanting to be more than a ski resort. Being a year-round destination and a self-contained playground is more profitable than a one-season business. Opponents don’t want resort owners to make a buck while sacrificing what the community is today.

It's not that all opponents are satisfied with the status quo; many said they were open to improvements, but on a much smaller scale.

Wirth described the base of the mountain as being an 82-acre parking lot; in other words, it's being wasted.

The plan includes a controversial mountain adventure center. Some call it a 90,000-square-foot indoor water park, others call it an athlete's training facility. At the meeting a Squaw representative said it would be both and then some, with the final components decided as the resort gets closer to actually putting something in the ground.

A simulation was shown of what the buildings will look like as one drives up Squaw Valley Road from Highway 89. Six of them will be 96-feet tall, or eight stories.

About 400 people turned out for the daylong hearing – many showing their colors. Purple vs. white. If only it were that simple, the purple would have won by sheer numbers. They were the ones representing "Keep Tahoe True". Those in white were about "Squaw Tomorrow". The colors are strategic – purple and white have long been the colors of this resort.

The opposition was set out in front of the North Tahoe Event Center with signs, shirts and bumper stickers. Proponents were inside the lobby with large posters promoting the benefits. In the hearing room people held up signs saying "Deny this project" and "Listen to the community".

Of the 98 people who spoke, 58 were against the project, while 40 were for it.

Most of those who spoke in favor of the project worked for Alpine or Squaw Valley, or somehow financially benefit from the resorts.

Water, traffic and affordable housing were the overriding

concerns of opponents. The resort believes the water supply will be adequate even though data is based on wells yet to be drilled. Traffic is already an issue, as underlined by a captain with the California Highway Patrol. While commissioners touched on this, gridlock was not enough to derail the project. As for housing, 300 units will be built for people who work at the resort – some of which will be dormitory style.

Drones: the good, the bad and the ugly

By Katie Vane, High Country News

The Zapata Ranch in southern Colorado is one of the few places that bison can still roam freely. Until recently, scientists and volunteers surveyed the herd the old-fashioned way: with binoculars and the naked eye. “It’s a shock how you can lose track of 2,000 bison on a 45,000-acre unfenced pasture,” says Chris Pague, Colorado Nature Conservancy senior conservation ecologist. But last year, The Nature Conservancy counted the herd using an increasingly ubiquitous conservation tool: an unmanned aerial vehicle, more commonly known as a drone.

Drones can be cheaper, more efficient and safer than traditional manned aircraft, and may also provide more accurate data. A six-bladed drone and camera costs about \$1,500, and can deliver imagery with resolution at the centimeter level. Government agencies and nonprofits are already exploring their use in conservation, land management and wildland firefighting, with at least a dozen pilot projects currently in the works.

But introducing new technology to wild areas is tricky. Drones may unduly stress wildlife, as a study of black bears in *Current Biology* last year demonstrated. Recreational drones have also endangered wildland firefighting crews.

And problems will likely mount as drone sales outpace regulations.

Read the whole story

Bugs to be main focus at SLT Library

The South Lake Tahoe Library will host Bohart Museum of Entomology on Aug. 12.

The free outdoor show starts at 2pm at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.. in South Lake Tahoe.

UC Davis' Bohart Museum of Entomology will be showing various insect specimens, as well as live animals.

Northern Nevada hits record dry spell

By Cassie Wilson, KRNV-TV

Dry weather is common in Northern Nevada; we are of course a high desert. But as of Aug. 10, the Reno-Tahoe Airport officially hit a 79-day dry spell.

In the last 10 years, the longest dry pattern we've seen was 92 days in the summer of 2011. And the current dry spell record is 129 days, which was set from July 19-Nov. 24, 1995.

The airport hasn't registered rain since May 23, but many other places across Nevada have.

Read the whole story

3D-printed gun seized at Reno airport

By Scott Sonner, AP

RENO — The Transportation Security Administration says screening agents confiscated a plastic handgun produced with a 3-D printer from a man's carry-on luggage last week at Reno-Tahoe International Airport.

TSA spokeswoman Lorie Dankers said Wednesday it's not known if the plastic firearm would work, but it had five .22-caliber bullets with it.

She says the confiscation may be a first of its kind in the U.S.

Replica or not, Dankers says guns aren't allowed on aircraft unless they're in checked luggage.

Dankers says the passenger in Reno chose to leave the gun and

ammunition behind and was allowed to board his flight last Thursday.

The man wasn't arrested or issued a citation. Still, Dankers says he could face a civil fine up to \$7,500.

Motorcyclist thrown from bike because of deer



An Oregon man is airlifted
to Renown in Reno from
Alpine County.
Photo/Provided

A Portland man sustained major injuries when the motorcycle he was riding collided with a deer in Hope Valley on Aug. 10.

Rudolf Jung, 32, was going south on Highway 89 near Picketts Junction when a deer ran out from the west side of the road. Jung was unable to avoid striking the animal. The motorcycle overturned and Jung was ejected.

He was airlifted to Renown Medical Center in Reno shortly after the 12:20 accident.

Friends he was traveling with administered aid until first responders arrived.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*